

A NEW SUBSPECIES OF MANGROVE WARBLER
(*DENDROICA PETECHIA*) FROM MEXICO

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Within the highly polytypic parulid species *Dendroica petechia*, those populations in which definitively plumaged males have chestnut heads are collectively called "Mangrove Warblers." Of these, the current literature recognizes three subspecies in Mexico (Miller *et al.*, 1957): *D. p. castaneiceps* Ridgway from Baja California, *D. p. rhizophorae* van Rossem from the Pacific coast, and *D. p. bryanti* Ridgway from the Caribbean coast. Recent collecting activity by the authors and Allan R. Phillips has enabled us to compare series of freshly molted specimens of Mangrove Warbler from several localities in Mexico. We were able to verify the distinctness of the three Mexican subspecies presently admitted, but have not investigated the validity of *hueyi* van Rossem, considered a synonym of *castaneiceps* by Miller *et al.* (*op. cit.*). In addition, we have found that the range attributed to *bryanti* is occupied by two recognizable forms, one of which is described below as new.

Specimens collected by the junior author have been deposited in the Minnesota Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis; and at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. In addition to these specimens and those in Carnegie Museum, we have examined Mangrove Warblers from the American Museum of Natural History, Chicago Natural History Museum, Peabody Museum of Natural History at Yale University, Museum of Zoology at Louisiana State University, and from the personal collections of Allan R. Phillips and George M. Sutton. We are grateful for permission to utilize this material. In addition, Dr. Phillips and Dr. Philip S. Humphrey of the

United States National Museum supplied us with needed information. The senior author's field work in 1965 was supported by the Edward O'Neil Fund of Carnegie Museum. For permits to collect birds in the Republic of Mexico, we are indebted to the officials of the Departamento de Conservación de Fauna Silvestre. Material from Tlacotalpan, Veracruz, was collected by the junior author during the course of field work on the ecology of arthropod-borne viruses, supported in part by United States Public Health Service Training Grant No. 5-T1-A1-231-02 from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease.

As pointed out by Deignan (1961: 534), Ridgway's name *Dendroica Vieillotii*, var. *Bryanti* was based on a series of males from "Mexico, from Honduras (Dr. Bryant) and Yucatan (Dr. Schott) to Mazatlan (Col. Grayson)" (Ridgway, 1873: 606). Grayson's specimens pertain to the race now called *rhizophorae* van Rossem (not to *castaneiceps* Ridgway as stated by Deignan, *loc. cit.*). Although Hellmayr (1935: 379) states of *bryanti* "type, from Belize, British Honduras, in U. S. National Museum," no type specimen or type locality was specified by Ridgway in his original description. Deignan (*loc. cit.*) lists seven USNM catalogue numbers as possible "cotypes" of *bryanti*. Three of these, of which only one remains in the U.S. National Museum, were from Yucatán. Four numbers refer to specimens from Belize, but Deignan points out that, because of renumbering, two of these catalogue numbers may refer to the same one of the three Belize specimens now in Washington. Deignan neither states nor implies that any selection of a type specimen nor restriction of type locality was ever made. It is clear, however, that Ridgway himself considered Belize the type locality of *bryanti* (Ridgway, 1902: 530), and USNM 74626 its type specimen. This specimen was, at the time of Ridgway's original description, loaned to him by Dr. Henry Bryant, whose name he gave to the new form. The specimen was obtained by the U. S. National Museum in 1878. On the Bryant Collection label, according to Dr. Humphrey, the word "Type" appears in a handwriting identified as that of Ridgway. It is not known just when this designation was made, but it must have been before Cherrie (1891: 524, 525) specifically mentioned having compared his Costa Rican specimens with *the type* of *bryanti*. Further, Cherrie's description of the color of this "type" ("the jugulum and breast . . . marked with a few very indistinct and mostly concealed streaks of chestnut-rufous") applies, again according to Dr. Humphrey, only to USNM 74626 among the four

male "cotypes" [= syntypes]. According to Article 74 (a) (i) of the "International Code of Zoological Nomenclature," the designation of a lectotype must be *published* (i.e., not merely a label designation). As a formality, therefore, we hereby designate USNM 74626, from Belize, British Honduras, as the lectotype of *Dendroica Vieillotii*, var. *Bryanti* Ridgway, 1873.

This action removes Yucatán from consideration as the type locality of *bryanti*, but from a strictly taxonomic viewpoint it would have been immaterial whether Belize or Yucatán had been chosen (although Belize has the advantage of being more precise than "Yucatán") as there is no significant difference between specimens from these two areas. On the other hand, material from the northern portion of the range currently attributed to *bryanti* differs from both Yucatán and British Honduras specimens. Although not striking, the differences between the two populations are certainly as great as those defining currently recognized subspecies of *Dendroica petechia* elsewhere in its large range. The northern Gulf coast population, then, may be described as follows:

***Dendroica petechia oraria*, new subspecies.**

TYPE: Minnesota Museum of Natural History No. 14594, adult male (cranium fully ossified), collected 2 miles south of Buena Vista (= about 9 miles north of Tlacotalpan), Veracruz, Mexico, November 16, 1958, by Robert W. Dickerman (original no. 9067).

CHARACTERS: Similar to *D. p. bryanti* but unworn specimens darker and more greenish (less yellowish) dorsally; dorsal coloration nearly uniform rather than brighter and more yellowish on rump and upper tail coverts as in *bryanti*, *rhizophorae*, *castaneiceps*, and *xanthotera* Todd of Costa Rica (this character difficult to assess in worn specimens because the rump area, protected by the folded wings, is subject to less wear and looks brighter); in series, underparts averaging less heavily streaked with brown than *bryanti*, especially on the flanks (even the least streaked *bryanti* show some streaking on flank feathers, while most *oraria* are scarcely, if at all, streaked in this area); yellow of underparts in unworn plumage averaging paler, less golden; dusky portion of inner webs of rectrices more extensive. Comparisons were made primarily among definitively plumaged male specimens. In this plumage there is much individual and seasonal variation in the color and extent of chestnut on the heads of both *bryanti* and *oraria*, but no

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geographic variation among seasonally comparable specimens was evident. There is no difference in size between *bryanti* and *oraria*.

ETYMOLOGY: The subspecific name selected for the new form is from the Latin *orarius*, "of the coast."

DISTRIBUTION: Mangrove zone of coastal Mexico from southern Tamaulipas to western Tabasco, intergrading with *bryanti* in eastern Tabasco and Campeche. Paynter (1955: 247) knew of no Campeche records, but stated that this could be explained "probably partly because of the rarity of mangroves along much of the coast and partly because collectors have neglected that area of the state." Phillips and the authors collected a series of 10 Mangrove Warblers on Isla del Carmen, 17-18 kilometers east of Ciudad del Carmen, Campeche, on January 9, 1965. Dickerman collected 8 males on September 25, 1965, on both sides of the Campeche-Tabasco border, at the mouth of the Río San Pedro y San Pablo. We have also examined one male from Sánchez Magallanes, western Tabasco, collected by D. G. Berrett on December 12, 1961. Although there are stretches of coast from which we have seen no specimens (southeastern Veracruz; central Tabasco; Campeche from the Tabasco border to Isla del Carmen), present or former continuity between the ranges of *oraria* and *bryanti* is indicated by the intermediacy of certain populations. The series from Isla del Carmen, although nearest *bryanti*, approaches *oraria* in having, on the average, somewhat darker backs and less ventral streaking than typical *bryanti*. The series from the Campeche-Tabasco border is quite variable, especially in tail pattern, but averages nearest *oraria* in general color. The single male from western Tabasco is even nearer *oraria* but, again, has a tail pattern more like that of *bryanti*.

Localities from which specimens have been examined are as follows:

oraria: TAMAULIPAS: Lomas del Real (vicinity of); Tampico. VERACRUZ: Laguna Tamiahua; Boca del Río; Tlacotalpan (vicinity of). TABASCO: Sánchez Magallanes (somewhat intermediate toward *bryanti*).

oraria towards *bryanti*: TABASCO-CAMPECHE border at Río San Pedro y San Pablo.

bryanti towards *oraria*: CAMPECHE: Isla del Carmen.

bryanti: a long series was available, within which no differences were noted between mainland and insular examples. Detailed comparisons with *oraria* were made with *bryanti* males from the following localities: BRITISH HONDURAS: All Pines; Belize; Glover's Reef. YUCA-

TAN: Chicxulub Puerto; Dzilam; Progreso; Santa Clara. QUINTANA ROO: Chinchorro Bank; Isla Contoy; Isla Holbox; Isla Mujeres; Vigia Chica.

A word on the specimen from Isla Mujeres is in order. Paynter (1955: 247) characterized as "noteworthy" the "apparent absence of a resident Yellow Warbler on Isla Mujeres." He overlooked a specimen in the Chicago Natural History Museum (No. 111970) collected by Rudyerd Boulton on Isla Mujeres, January 26, 1940. It is a young male in molt, but is definitely *bryanti*, and neither a member of the migratory North American *aestiva* group of subspecies nor a stray of the West Indian group of subspecies (to which the Isla Cozumel race *rufivertex* belongs). It is possible that this individual was a stray from the mainland or from one of the adjacent islands inhabited by *bryanti*, but the possibility must be considered that there is a small resident population of Mangrove Warblers on Isla Mujeres.

SUMMARY

A lectotype from Belize, British Honduras, is designated for *Dendroica petechia bryanti* Ridgway. This subspecies intergrades in Campeche and Tabasco with *D. p. oraria*, described as new with type locality near Buena Vista, Veracruz. The Mangrove Warbler is recorded for the first time from Isla Mujeres, Quintana Roo, from which it was said to be absent.

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